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EDUCATIONAL NEWS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN GERMANY

A comparison of the training of teachers in Germany with that in the United States must take into consideration two important differences in the status of the profession in the two countries. First, almost all the teachers in boys' schools (both the *Volksschules* and the *Gymnasium*) are men. In 1911 there were 148,217 men and but 39,268 women teaching in the *Volksschule*, though boys and girls were numerically equal, the total number of pupils being 10,300,000. *Gymnasium* teachers are all men. Women never instruct boys, except in the lower grades and in small rural communities.

The second difference is that in Germany an appointment in either branch of the school system is for life: teaching is a life-occupation. Moreover, the comparatively good salaries and the certainty of a pension at sixty-five, as in any other branch of government service, and other causes, insure many more applications for positions than can be accepted. The result is severe competition and the elimination of weak candidates through searching entrance-examinations. In Prussia only one-third of the candidates for training are accepted; the average for the Empire is 50 per cent. Germany has, then, for both the *Volksschule* and the *Gymnasium* a body of candidates much more adaptable to thorough professional training than the prospective teachers of corresponding schools in the United States. In America the average tenure of office is five years, and 90 per cent of the teachers are women.

These essential differences explain in part the superiority of the German professional preparation. The special training of secondary-school teachers in both branches is characterized by two features indifferently administered in American normal schools and universities. These two features are the examinations and the pronounced emphasis upon practice teaching. To the *Volksschule* seminar, corresponding to the normal schools of the United States, admission is gained by rigid oral and written examination. At the conclusion of the seminar course candidates are again subjected to an examination, conducted by a government commission. The successful candidates finally receive

¹ For a full discussion consult the United States Bureau of Education *Bulletin* No. 35, 1914, by Charles H. Judd.

certificates, but are required after two years' experience in teaching to undergo still a third examination. When this is successfully passed, candidates are at last assured of life-positions.

More important is the second feature—two years' work in practice teaching. This work has several important features. First, model lessons are presented by seminar teachers before the candidates. Secondly, there is the preparation in writing of trial lessons (both form and content), during the preparation of which several students may take charge of the class. Thirdly, throughout the entire last year of the seminar, students are required to conduct from four to six periods of continuous instruction in the practice school under the direction of the seminar teachers.

Candidates for teaching positions in the *Gymnasia* are graduates of the universities, most of them having received a Doctor's degree. They, too, undergo most formidable examinations conducted by special commissions. Moreover—

after the examination the successful candidate now has before him two years of contact with the classroom before he can become a teacher with a regular position. The first of these trial years is known as the seminar year and the second as the trial year. During both of these periods the candidate is connected with one of the secondary schools, assigned to it by the government officers, and is under the general direction of the principal or director of the school.

In other words, the candidate becomes, in the strictest sense of the word, an apprentice, visiting and observing, helping the regular workers to teach, and meeting periodically for consultation with the director and to present reports. After one year of this preliminary work, candidates are allowed to give six to eight hours a week instruction in the presence of the regular teachers.

These two features—the elimination of unfit candidates by examination, and a thorough system of apprenticeship—constitute the essence of the “special, rigid training of the secondary-school teachers,” which “stand out as perhaps the most significant” characteristics of the German school system.

VALUELESS COURSES IN METHODS

“I enjoyed my work in the Principles and Method of Teaching, but I do not find that I can make very much use of it in my present position.” That it is to this effect that we often hear normal-school, college, and university graduates speaking, is the assertion of Mr. Frank P. Bachman.

The truth of his statement is evident from the almost universal criticism of classroom instruction by educational experts, who are conducting school surveys the country over. The fact is that courses in the methods of teaching, whether general courses or courses devoted to the teaching of a single subject, are usually vague, theoretical, and widely divorced from intimate contact with actual schoolroom situations.

Consider a course in methods as it is too frequently conducted. The work consists of the perusal of one of the many textbooks on classroom management, accompanied by supplementary lectures upon such topics as the aims of high-school instruction, the organization of the courses of study, the five formal steps of a recitation, and the like. If a model school is available, students go in a mass or singly to observe a few classes. They make approximately one visit a week, sometimes accompanied by their instructor. Following these visits there are more or less informal discussions of miscellaneous classroom situations observed. Sometimes the students write reports of their observations. Still further to pad out his course, an instructor frequently requires report of readings, or term papers on the pedagogical aspects of his special subject. In the preparation of these papers students mull over the painfully thin contributions which fill the pages of the far too numerous educational periodicals. Few of these articles deal with actual facts. Most of them are the rapid theorizings of teachers who desire to "get into print" and, to do so, write colorless discussions based upon inadequate data.

So conducted, courses in methods cannot be too heartily condemned. They are utterly unfitted for developing anything like skill in the solution of problems in actual teaching. It is barely conceivable that a boy might learn how bricks are laid, if he put in his apprenticeship by standing over an artisan and watching him lay a few thousand bricks; especially if at the side of the student there is a supposedly past-master of bricklaying, telling him how the workman is handling his trowel, and how edges are chipped off the bricks. The observer might even learn how bricks are laid by reading about the art in carefully written expository manuals; especially if the expert is present to elucidate processes not clearly expressed. The observer might even write a paper on the laying of fire brick, as contrasted with the laying of plain brick, after having prepared a bibliography and a brief upon the subject. By such methods an extraordinary observer might eventually learn *how* bricks are laid, but he would never acquire skill in laying bricks. Such a bricklayer, supposing for a minute, that he gained admittance to a

union, might well say when facing his first job: "I enjoyed my work in learning how to lay brick, but I can't make very much use of it in my present position."

Now the handling of a class in history or mathematics or English is not completely analogous to the laying of brick. Situations faced by a teacher are not $8' \times 4'$, nor are they solved by manual dexterity. Judgment, tact, knowledge of human nature, are far more difficult to attain than muscular effort. Nevertheless, the process of acquiring skill in teaching is in some respects analogous to the acquiring of the brick-layer's skill. Apprenticeship—actually performing the necessary operations—is universally indispensable for acquiring skill. It is true in all manual crafts, it is so in surgery, in dentistry, in law, to a certain extent in the ministry, in the diplomatic service. It is no less true in teaching. If what has just been stated is accurate, normal and university courses in methods of teaching can be of real value only in so far as they involve actual participation by prospective teachers in classroom problems.

PRACTICE TEACHING VERSUS REAL APPRENTICESHIP

American educators, working with young men and women most of whom unfortunately regard their teaching career as a temporary make-shift, have long recognized that practice teaching is indispensable. Model schools abound. Young women labor in them faithfully in duties carefully prescribed and criticized. The main difficulty is that except for meager preparation in subject-matter and a few courses in methods, practice teaching has no prerequisites. Thorough entrance examinations are unknown. The almost universal cry for growth in numbers is in this respect an unmitigated curse. Partly, then, through the natural shortcomings of the teaching profession in America, and partly because of the soft-heartedness of the promotion system, practice teaching is often feeble in the extreme.

But the signs of reawakening are at hand. Today we find many departments of education insisting upon a meaningful apprenticeship. This is the case in the University of Iowa. In the high school of the University of Wisconsin there is an intimate connection between the courses in methods and actual classroom experience. Harvard University has an arrangement with the city schools in Newton, by which apprenticeship is secured for prospective teachers. Equally promising is the movement in many states for apprentice teachers. Candidates for the city school system, if inexperienced, are required to attach

themselves, for an entire year or two, to the schools, acting as assistant teachers. Most American cities, using this plan, allow a small stipend, half-pay in some instances, for this service; in Germany, on the contrary, the seminar and trial years are spent without pay. The University of Cincinnati co-operates closely with the city schools. In New York, Columbia and other institutions are co-operating with the city schools by placing half-time students as assistant teachers. There is coming to the fore everywhere something resembling the German system of apprenticeship—learn by doing, learn not in the somewhat strained situations of a model-school classroom, but by subordinate participation in everyday problems of the city schoolroom. This is real apprenticeship.

Is there then no place for courses in method? Yes, there is a subordinate place. Professional equipment quite apart from skill is highly desirable. Moreover, such courses, in an institution in which the practice schools and the normal department are properly co-ordinated, may wisely be made the means of checking up the experiences of practice teaching. In the classrooms of these special courses, the preparation of apprentices may be supervised, their problem discussed, and their questions answered. The instructor of the courses in methods can relieve his colleagues in the practice schools of much of the labor incident to the handling of practice teaching. This one point must never be overlooked. The net product of special courses in method must not be as in the past "too much theory," "too much talking," the comment which Superintendent Kendell reports as being most frequent. The net product of the courses in method must rest solidly upon practical experience in teaching through apprenticeship.

TRAINING COURSES IN BOSTON AND MINNEAPOLIS

In April the School Board of Boston adopted a course in training for high-school teachers similar to the plan for elementary teachers which for some time has been in use in that city. The essence of the plan is a two-year apprenticeship in the high school under the general supervision of the department of practice and training. Concerning this plan the *Boston Post* gives the following details: Candidates for the schools of Boston are admitted only upon examination, which emphasizes practical classroom experience. Inexperienced candidates are given a thorough course in practical work, covering a period of two years. This plan is based upon the requirement that the candidate must have had a year's

work in secondary education, either in a regular college course, or in postgraduate study. The salary for the first year is \$800, and \$900 for the second.

Boston is a typical example of a city school system which is planning to secure desirable candidates by thorough examinations and to insure preliminary training resembling the German system of apprenticeship for the *Gymnasium*.

In co-operation with the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis is also adopting a system of "traveling assistants" who are to receive credit in the University toward a degree, for their apprenticeship in the city schools. Professor F. H. Swift and Superintendent F. E. Spaulding have matured the plans; their administration will be in the hands of Raymond A. Kent, principal of the University High School.

Certificates will be issued by the Minneapolis high-school authorities to those who take the course, attesting their fitness for positions as "teaching assistants." The plan is really an effort toward the introduction of a fifth year of professional training which the University authorities expect eventually to require of all students preparing for the teaching profession.

Important features of the plan provide that:

"Graduates of the University to be eligible must have fulfilled the requirements for the University state teacher's certificate.

"The period of professional study and training for such teaching assistants may extend over one year and one summer-school session or over two years, omitting attendance upon a summer session as follows:

"One year of advanced professional graduate study at the University combined with teaching in the Minneapolis high schools, followed by attendance upon one summer-school session at the University of Minnesota or elsewhere, shall entitle one to at least six professional credits.

"Two years of graduate professional study at the University, combined with teaching in the Minneapolis high schools without attendance upon summer school, shall constitute the two years' course.

"Certificates or diplomas shall be granted by the Minneapolis school authorities, and indorsed by some University authority.

"Certificate shall contain a statement of the amount and quality of the recipient's teaching and of the professional course pursued."

Superintendent Spaulding said of the new plans that graduates of the University will be selected for these positions by the school authorities upon the same general basis as other teachers are selected.

"The compensation, \$300, is as nearly as possible proportionate to what is paid regular first-year teachers," Dr. Spaulding said. "They will not be permitted to do more than two hours of actual teaching per day during their first year, nor more than three hours per day the second year. They will devote

no time outside school hours to school work other than preparation for the classes they teach. Regular teachers, on the other hand, spend a large amount of time daily after school hours, recording marks, correcting papers, and doing various other things."

MISDIRECTED INVESTIGATION PROPERLY CHARACTERIZED

President Herman C. Bumpus of Tufts College, formerly business manager of the University of Wisconsin, in an address before the Brown University Teachers Association, on April 17, thus comments on the recent investigation of the University of Wisconsin:

Three or four years ago, when the lost motions of the bricklayer were being capitalized and Success Magazines were going into the hands of receivers, certain efficiency experts were assigned to "speed up" the University of Wisconsin, that held at that time the foremost position among publicly supported educational institutions. I happened to be where I could watch the working of this "efficiency process" during a period of three or four years, indeed, up to the time of its complete collapse as an instrument of educational betterment.

The men assigned as efficiency experts began with the business side of college administration; they were not college men, but accountants, men ignorant of college purposes, out of sympathy with college ideals, arrogantly insisting upon the abolition of long-established methods that they did not care to understand, and arbitrarily insistent upon the introduction of fantastic methods repugnant to the purposes of an educational institution.

One evening I was called aside and told with all the secrecy that envelops the report of a Pinkerton detective that evidence had been unearthed which provided conclusively that students were receiving instruction at less than cost. The efficiency expert gasped for air when assured that his discovery was probably true, and that the state actually paid two million and a half each year for the privilege of being swindled in this way. Then followed a recommendation that the administrative staff of clerks, accountants, etc., could be reduced by one-half through the adoption of certain efficiency devices. Methods were put into execution, the staff was disorganized, the loss of records was irreparable and the so-called process of economy resulted in doubling the cost of operation through the introduction of perfectly useless machinery.

A chronic condition of disturbance and unrest is bad for the business side of a university, but it is almost fatal when the instructional side becomes infected. The injury that the University of Wisconsin has suffered since the inquisitorial methods of so-called efficiency experts invaded the educational side of the institution is irreparable. For over a year an educational staff costing the state a million and a half has had its attention and its energies diverted from its

legitimate work and centered upon the formulation of protests against unwarranted interference, unfair misrepresentation, and against the ruthless destruction of long-established educational ideals.

Through a grilling fire of official questionnaires—those diabolical instruments of intellectual destruction—the student was compelled to attack the teaching staff, and each member of the teaching staff felt that he must answer questions reflecting upon the capacity of his colleagues. Misunderstandings between the faculty and the governing board multiplied, and the governing board then had its troubles with the state authorities. Tired of turmoil, some of the faculty are seeking employment elsewhere; the overthrow of the entire administration is threatened; the legislature is hostile and plans to cut the appropriations; new construction has ceased, and we witness the sad sight of an institution made desolate by an unnecessary and inexcusable reality, that under the name of “constructional work” has wrought destruction and under the name of efficiency has wrought havoc.

It has not been my intention to imply that the efficiency of universities cannot be increased; it has been my intention to imply that efficiency cannot be increased through the investigations or advice of those who are ignorant of university purposes and out of sympathy with university methods.

STATEMENTS OF THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Apart from the merits of the controversy in the University of Utah, comment may be made upon the statement of the Regents recently made in response to a request of a group of alumni. The seemingly restrained and sensible tone of the statement is grateful. Here is a brief extract:

It is asserted that these resigning professors “stand on holy ground.” If such be the case, is it impious for us to suggest that the ninety or so teachers who have not resigned stand on unholy ground? Is it not quite logical to conclude that they are either devoid of conscience or, as opportunists, have compromised with their consciences in order to save their salaries?

But rather do we reach the conclusion that the gentlemen who have resigned did so hastily and without due consideration. We regret this inconsiderate action, so far, at least, as concerns the majority of them, since we are thus deprived of the services of competent men whose positions it may possibly be difficult to fill. It seems relevant, however, here to note that the reasons now assigned by some, at least, of the resigning professors are quite complex when compared with the simple reasons given by them in their letters of resignation.

The attitude of the Board does not arise from the arrogant assumption that it is infallible. Whatever the issue in the beginning of this controversy may have been, it has now become: Shall the Regents exercise their discretion in the control of the University, or shall they surrender that discretion and

control to any group of instructors who may feel themselves to be wronged and who may arouse the public to their support, or to the faculty as a whole, or to your committee, able and trustworthy as it unquestionably is?

This we are prevented from doing because of our deep consciousness that, on the whole, we are right, and from our unwillingness to create a precedent under which the ultimate control of the University shall be submitted to a mass meeting rather than to the determination and discretion of the Board.

COMMISSIONER SNEDDEN ON THE NEW HIGH SCHOOL

(From an address before the Philadelphia High-School Teachers' Association, March 20, 1915)

We can work out a satisfactory program of liberal or cultural education only by going into the world of active life, where men and women from twenty to fifty years of age are found, and from a study of the valuable and enduring qualities here found, deriving standards of personal cultivation, social leadership, and character, which shall constitute a basis for constructing a sound program of liberal education. I can readily imagine that this process might give us a new high-school program in which we should have no algebra, no Latin, no French, no German, no physics, no chemistry, and no ancient history as these subjects are now taught, but in which, nevertheless, we should do much more than we are now doing to make the liberal-minded men and women whom the twentieth century needs as leaders among its citizens, as sources of good example among its men and women. Perhaps under such general designations as social science studies, natural science studies approached from the standpoint of appreciation, mental science studies, contemporary English literature, the speaking and writing of good English, the appreciation of fine and applied art, the study of contemporary history as that history is now being made, we shall be able to build up programs that will genuinely assist our youth to possess themselves, to the maximum possible extent, of the social inheritance which should be theirs.

The new high school will teach some things for the primary purpose of producing in the learner the capacity *to do, to execute, to achieve* definite results in important fields. On the other hand, it will teach some other things with the primary end in view of procuring *appreciation, comprehension*, and the other qualities that make the consumer or utilizer a good consumer or utilizer. It will surely teach English language primarily with a view to producing ability to speak and write good English. But, it will teach poetry primarily from the standpoint of making a good reader, appreciator, or utilizer of poetry—a very different thing. When a foreign language is taught, the object will be to have the student learn to use the foreign language, either as a medium of thought-getting or of thought expression, in a definite and precise way. On the other hand, it may teach some pupils *about* a foreign language with very different ends in view.

A SCHOLARSHIP BULLETIN

Principal C. D. Donaldson of the Coleraine, Minnesota, High School, sends to the *School Review* the following scholarship bulletin for the month of March.

SCHOLARSHIP BULLETIN

GREENWAY HIGH SCHOOL

For School Month Ending March 26, 1915

Average standings with which parents may compare the standings of their children.

	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March
Freshman Class.....	83.77	84.58	84.11	85.06	80.95	82.83	84.44
Boys.....	82.49	82.84	83.25	83.03	77.96	79.72	82.60
Girls.....	85.89	87.28	86.48	88.35	85.05	88.17	87.61
Sophomore Class.....	86.34	87.30	85.18	86.37	84.29	86.12	87.22
Boys.....	86.08	87.03	84.30	87.17	83.55	86.58	87.66
Girls.....	86.55	87.50	85.83	85.77	85.18	85.79	86.81
Junior Class.....	83.83	84.33	83.13	85.39	84.00	84.41	84.45
Boys.....	82.48	83.06	79.86	83.06	82.28	82.03	81.90
Girls.....	85.18	85.60	86.39	87.72	85.71	86.79	87.01
Senior Class.....	86.87	86.04	86.58	86.45	85.92	87.11	86.70
Boys.....	85.00	82.49	83.75	82.26	85.85	84.61	84.57
Girls.....	87.50	87.62	87.84	88.31	85.96	87.95	87.65
School.....							
Boys.....	83.60	83.90	82.42	84.01	81.80	82.01	84.03
Girls.....	86.30	87.04	86.57	87.37	85.49	87.01	87.22

COLERAINE, MINNESOTA

March 29, 1915

C. D. DONALDSON, *Principal*

Mr. Donaldson writes that a copy of this bulletin is sent to the parents of all pupils in the high school, on the first Monday of each month. The bulletin is displayed also in the form of a large chart drawn upon the board in the general assembly room. It is accompanied by a second chart drawn to scale, in colors, the graph of each class first, second, third, and fourth year being shown. A third chart indicates the comparative grades of the boys and girls.

By these means parents are enabled to compare the scholarship of their child with the general scholarship of his class, of the boys and girls in each class, and of the entire school. Largely owing to the stimulating effects of this device, the Greenway High School shows but $8\frac{2}{3}$ per cent of pupils below the passing mark. Teachers and principals believe that ultimately the percentage of pupils failing to pass will be reduced to 4 or 5 per cent.